One of the key challenges that big corporates are facing with the emergence of 'big data and social media' is that even startups now have the potential to challenge them with the effective usage of these tools, said Bharti Airtel Global chief financial officer B Srikanth at the Indian School of Business Leadership Summit (ILS) here.

Explaining that for established companies, big data and social media are threats as they are used to running in a traditional manner and are the 'last movers' in adopting new-age concepts, he said startups, who might be the last movers in a particular sector are turning out to be first movers in the big data space. “I think this is something that every company needs to be conscious, which is why big data and social media have to be a boardroom topic in a much bigger way,” he added.

Meanwhile, speaking about the company, which has so far invested over Rs 1.3 lakh crore in the country, the Airtel CFO hinted at pumping in more investments in the area of data and mobile internet services in the coming days. “In terms of mobile data revenue, the monthly revenue has just crossed Rs 600 crore and it has just become a billion dollar business for us,” he said, adding that the company expects more investments to be made in this area without specifying any number.

Meanwhile, Deloitte senior director Rajarshi Sengupta pointed out that in the name of social media adoption, there are many companies who just have a Facebook page but no provision for customer feedback on it. Gramener CEO J Ramachandran said one of the key challenges for corporates is to ensure that the adoption of big data results in a good return on investment.